

BOOKS, PERIODICALS & PAMPHLETS

Bulimulidae: Catalog of Species

by C. LEONARD RICHARDSON. 1995. *Tryonia* No. 28. 458 pp. \$60.00.

Characteristic of the modern practice of malacology is a global demand for taxonomic authority files—those documents and databases that reflect state-of-the-art opinions on the valid names of taxa, synonyms, authorship, and classification. Indeed, it is hard to imagine natural heritage programs or museum departments running effectively without them. As more and more agencies worldwide become concerned with biodiversity record-keeping, it becomes ever more important to inspect new publications that might be used as the basis for authority files and hence affect the course of future administrative decisions.

Tryonia is a data-rich series published on an occasional basis by the Department of Malacology of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia. Its volumes focus on research resources of that department and other malacological information resources. Previous volumes by Leonard Richardson that catalogue species in the families of land snails include Nos. 3 (Helicidae), 6 (Helminthoglyptidae), 9 (Bradybaenidae), 10 (Oreohelicidae), 12 (Camaenidae), 13 (Polygyracea), 16 and 18 (Streptaxacea, parts 1 and 2), 19 (Partulidae), 22 (Urocoptidae), 25 (Cerionidae), and 27 (Bulimulacea: Amphibulimidae, Anadromidae, Grangerellidae, Odontostomidae, Orthalicidae).

Genera of the Bulimulidae are presented in alphabetical order; species are arranged alphabetically under a genus, and each species-name is followed by a list—a long list in many cases—of literature citations of that name. A typical page averages about 62 such citations. Over the length of the volume this calculates to over 24,300 citations, a tribute to the diligence of compiler Richardson.

The lists of citations are not formal synonymies. They simply present references in the literature to a species-name, whether or not the reference work treated it as valid. They do not record the genus-names used in any of the citations. However, since the primary catalogued entities are *taxa* (that is, they are regarded as valid species, with synonyms cited, and assigned to specific genera), the catalogue is a kind of hybrid, and careless users run the risk of confusing taxa with names.

I would have liked very much to be able to report that this work succeeds as a record of the state of the art of bulimulid systematics. It was therefore disquieting to find that in about 3 minutes at my computer, logged on to a widely accessible biological literature database, I was able to locate 17 articles on Bulimulidae not listed by Richardson, including five that propose new taxa, another that

assigns to Bulimulidae two taxa formerly in another family, five that make other significant taxonomic changes (backed up by creditable data and argument), and five that present important geographic reviews.

In *Rabdotus* Albers, 1850, a taxon with which I have some experience, only three species have any references later than Breure (1979), and two of those citations come from one paper. The curtain seems to fall at 1984. Absent are Hoffman (1987) with the description of *Rabdotus milleri*; Hoffman (1988) with its reassignment of 20 species from *Rabdotus* to *Naesiotus*; Smith et al. (1990) with complete locality records for the taxa of Baja California and a new species (of the subgenus *Plicolumna*, wrongly synonymized under *Bulimulus* by Richardson); and Roth & Megaw (1989) with description of the geologically earliest occurrence of *Rabdotus*. All of these references are from the mainstream literature; at least the last two were sent as separates to the Department of Malacology in connection with its commendable reprint exchange program. Why did Richardson not cite them?

Rabdotus nigromontanus (properly a species of *Naesiotus* according to Hoffman, 1988) appears to be catalogued as a synonym of *Rabdotus dealbatus*, although none of the cited references treats it as such. Or perhaps that is not what Richardson means; according to the introduction, the “+” sign as used before the name *nigromontanus* designates names “that have been associated with a species (i.e., synonyms, varieties, subspecies, etc.)” Such a loosely defined convention tells the user little about the real status of the name or taxon. More disturbing is the possibility that because *Naesiotus nigromontanus*, actually a valid species with a limited range in southern Arizona, is not given full standing in this catalogue, it will be mis-curated in research collections, left out of biogeographic studies, or excluded from natural heritage databases.

These are merely sample criticisms, about taxa known to me. Further limitations of this work are those of the printed catalogue medium in general. The editor-in-chief of *Tryonia*, Gary Rosenberg, has recently written (Rosenberg, 1993:257), “The electronic database represents the next step in the production of such catalogues. . . . Printed catalogues are static, whereas databases are dynamic. Information in a database can be reorganized (alphabetically, systematically, geographically, chronologically, etc.) to suit the needs of the user. It can be queried in numerous ways, limited only by the ingenuity of the researcher and the types of raw data utilized by the database.” He might also have added that the best current opinion can be continually patched in, group by group, constantly enhancing the resource. It is too bad that the data in “Bulimulidae: Catalog of Species” did not first appear in dynamic, publicly accessible database form, rather than being locked—errors

and all—into this more static, almost anachronistic, document form.

B. Roth

Literature Cited

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NOTES, INFORMATION & NEWS

International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

The following applications were published on 30 March 1995 in Volume 52, Part 1 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. Comment or advice on these applications is invited for publication in the *Bulletin* and should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., % The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K.

Case 2949—*Aplysia juliana* Quoy & Gaimard, 1832 (Mollusca, Gastropoda): proposed conservation of the specific name.

Case 2922—*Octopus vulgaris* Cuvier, [1797] and *Loligo vulgaris* Lamarck, 1798 (Mollusca, Cephalopoda): proposed conservation of the specific names.

The following Opinions concerning mollusks were published on 30 March 1995 in Volume 52, Part 1 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. Copies of these Opinions can be obtained free of charge from the Executive Secretary at the address given above.

Opinion 1791. *Pleurotoma meneghinii* Mayer, 1868 (currently *Asthenotoma meneghinii*; Mollusca, Gastropoda): neotype replaced by rediscovered lectotype.

Opinion 1793. *Chtenopteryx* Appellöf, 1890 (Mollusca, Cephalopoda): confirmed as the correct original spelling.

Manuscript Reviewers for Volume 38 of *The Veliger*

The following outside reviewers contributed their time and effort to evaluate manuscripts submitted during the course

of production of Volume 38. The quality of *The Veliger* depends strongly on the voluntary service of independent reviewers such as these, and we are grateful to all of them.

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